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Letter dated 17 March 2004 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you, herewith, the text of a communication dated 2 March 2004 I received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi **Annan**

* Reissued for technical reasons.

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Annex

Letter dated 2 March 2004 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to the Secretary-General

[Original: English]

In accordance with Security Council resolutions 1386 (2001) and 1510 (2003), I attach a report on ISAF operations covering the period from 12 November 2003 to 12 February 2004. I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jaap de **Hoop Scheffer**

Enclosure

Quarterly report to the United Nations on the operations of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan

1. This report covers the period from 12 November 2003 to 12 February 2004. As at 10 February, the total strength of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was 6,264, including 233 troops from 11 non-NATO countries.

2. Minister Hikmet Cetin assumed his duties as NATO Senior Civil Representative in Afghanistan on 25 January 2004. He will be responsible for carrying forward the political-military aspects of the Alliance's assistance to the Afghan Transitional Authority in fulfilling the commitments under the Bonn Agreement.

Status of partner/non-NATO contributing countries

3. As at 10 February, a total of 19 NATO countries and 11 non-NATO countries are contributing to the ISAF mission.

Security

4. The security situation in Kabul and its environs (Kabul area of operations) is characterized as generally calm, but not stable. On 27 and 28 January 2004, two suicide attacks occurred against Canadian and United Kingdom ISAF patrols, which resulted in the deaths of one Canadian and one British soldier; six other ISAF soldiers were severely wounded. Numerous warnings continue to be received. Nevertheless, ISAF has continued to execute its framework security tasks in association with the Afghan National Army and the Kabul City Police.

5. ISAF assumed responsibility for the operations of the German provincial reconstruction team in Konduz on 30 December 2003. The security situation in the Konduz area of operations is assessed as calm, but not stable. Although the Opposition Militia Forces have no organized presence there, the area is nonetheless of interest to them since it is at the centre of narcotics production. The local infrastructure is fragile, the police have limited authority, and factional/tribal frictions continue to undermine security. Execution of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in Konduz, as one of the pilot projects, has led to no significant increase in tension.

Support to the Afghan Transitional Authority and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

A. Support to the Bonn Agreement process

6. ISAF assistance to the Bonn Agreement process includes:

(a) The Constitutional Loya Jirga was conducted by the Afghan Transitional Authority from 14 December 2003 to 4 January 2004. ISAF provided second-tier security support and also took a lead in planning by coordinating a quick reaction force to respond to any security incidents, an extensive search and explosive

ordnance clearance of the site, and information operations for the event. ISAF also provided standby emergency medical services.

(b) On 30 December 2003, ISAF took the first step in expanding its supporting role to the Afghan Transitional Authority by taking responsibility for the provincial reconstruction team in Konduz. This will facilitate the expansion of the influence of the Afghan Transitional Authority into provinces beyond the capital.

(c) ISAF has been supporting the voter registration process in Kabul since its start on 1 December 2003, with second-tier security support provided on request, within its means and capabilities.

(d) ISAF shares the general concern whether the registration process will be sufficiently advanced in time for elections in June 2004. ISAF has nonetheless contributed to the planning process. The exact role of ISAF and the nature of the security assistance required, based on the proposed operation plan of the Joint Election Management Body, remain to be determined, taking into account the primary role of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Afghan Transitional Authority in the organization and safety of the election process.

B. Support to security sector reform

7. With the addition of Herat and Jalalabad, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process now comprises eight pilot projects.

(a) The ISAF-assisted disarmament, demobilization and reintegration pilot project in Kabul was completed on 29 January 2004, with 1,797 Afghan Militia Force soldiers formally disarmed. Discussions are currently under way between the Afghan Ministry of Defence and the staff of ISAF headquarters to assess how best to maintain the momentum created by the pilot project so that a smooth transition can be achieved to the more substantial disarmament, demobilization and reintegration campaign proper.

(b) Pilot projects are ongoing in Konduz and Gardez; preparations for the launch of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in Mazar-e-Sharif are well under way, and planning for the Bamian programme has started. The pilot programme in Kandahar is currently scheduled to begin at the end of February.

(c) Although the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme makes provision for heavy weapons, it does not target them specifically. ISAF has initiated a heavy weapons cantonment programme to secure heavy weapons from Kabul city and its environs. Planned and executed in close cooperation with the Afghan Ministry of Defence, and gaining broad support, this is a confidence-building measure aimed at both internal and external audiences and will improve the security situation in Kabul. An agreement was signed between ISAF and the Afghan Ministry of Defence on 12 January and the heavy weapons cantonment started officially in Kabul on 15 January with the first convoy movement of heavy weapons. The next heavy weapons cantonment project began on 10 February. Heavy weapons cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes continue to run in parallel and are mutually supporting.

8. ISAF continued to support Afghan National Army training through the provision of mobile training teams, focusing on training for artillery, explosive

ordnance disposal and medical care. Embedded training teams and a "mentor" programme will assist the leadership and professional development of Afghan National Army headquarters and counterpart units. Further training opportunities are under consideration.

9. Enhancing the capability and authority of the Afghan national police force remains critical to extending both the rule of law and the authority of the central government. In Kabul, ISAF continues to contribute to the German-led police development programme through joint patrolling and assisting with an internal organizational review of the Kabul City Police. ISAF has also provided basic police and weapon training to the Border Police at Kabul International Airport.

10. The Joint Security Coordination Centre established under ISAF direction on 22 September 2003 continues to enjoy modest success in encouraging the disparate agencies of the Afghan Transitional Authority in Kabul to coordinate on security matters. The order formalizing the Centre's status combined with the aggressive lead of ISAF in bringing the various Afghan Transitional Authority organizations together promises an improvement in both coordination and security operations led by the Authority within Kabul.

11. ISAF supported the United Kingdom-led counter narcotics programme with accommodation and close protection for the teams engaged in training the Afghan Transitional Authority counter-narcotics forces in Kabul.

12. Judicial reform, essential for the establishment of the rule of law, is critically linked to the Bonn Agreement pillars, particularly for police training and counter narcotics. Additionally, ISAF continues to work closely with the Afghan Transitional Authority ministries to identify and address issues that impact directly upon the rule of law.

Attacks against ISAF and ISAF operational activities

13. There have been nine attacks on ISAF since 11 November 2003. Five of the attacks, which included rockets and improvised explosive devices, occurred in December 2003 with no fatalities. Three attacks occurred in January 2004; explosions south of the Kabul International Airport and in Kandahar, and two suicide attacks near the Canadian Camp Julien and the United Kingdom Camp Souter killed 17 Afghans and two ISAF soldiers. On 3 February, there were two explosions from rockets launched from the south-eastern part of Kabul. No casualties or damage were sustained.

14. Germany, as lead nation, has continued to run the Kabul International Airport since NATO took over the ISAF operation. The airport is used primarily by military or international community contracted aircraft. Currently, commercial use of the airport is limited to the Afghan national carrier. A common approach of the international community with respect to the airport's rehabilitation is crucial. In order to expedite this process, NATO will contribute to a framework document created by the International Civil Aviation Organization for the rehabilitation of the airport. In a next step, the Afghan authorities' approval for the framework will be sought. A transition plan for the airport has been developed to ensure a phased transition from Germany to NATO. The transition began on 11 February and is schedule to be complete by June 2004.

Outlook

15. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1510 (2003), and as approved by the North Atlantic Council, planning continues on ISAF expansion that will support and strengthen the ability of the Afghan Transitional Authority to provide a more secure environment for its people and for its governmental processes. ISAF has continued to fulfil its mandate to assist the Afghan Transitional Authority in the provision of security in mandated areas of operation. There is a risk that the security environment will deteriorate in localized areas, particularly in conjunction with the preparations for and conduct of elections planned for summer 2004. Security in both the Kabul and Konduz areas of operation is expected to improve in the medium and long term. ISAF remains active in security sector reform, in its support to the Afghan National Army and the Afghan Transitional Authority security agencies. Following the success of the Constitutional Loya Jirga, ISAF assistance to the Afghan Transitional Authority with the Bonn Agreement process is now focused on the forthcoming elections programme.